



November 2019

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Upcoming Events

November 2019

American Indian Heritage Month

Family Caregivers Month

Military Family Month

Veterans Day

National Veterans Day Ceremony

Arlington National Cemetery

November 11

Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 20

Thanksgiving

November 28

VA joined the Nation in observing Resolution Day (CRD) on October 17, 2019. In observance of CRD, the Department of Veterans Affairs' Office of Resolution Management produced this video: <https://youtu.be/fqyBqcvNRr0>.

ORM

Steps Toward Conflict Resolution

Callers can REACH to the Office of Resolution Management (ORM) using the new number,

1-888-566-3982 (TDD: 1-888-626-9008),

and speak with a specialist regarding

[Equal Employment Opportunity Complaint Processing](#), [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#), and the [Harassment Prevention Program](#).

REACH to ORM is available from 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. in all time zones. To file a discrimination or harassment complaint, you must contact [ORM](#) within 45 calendar days of the date of the alleged discriminatory incident.



Commemorate National American Indian Heritage Month

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) proudly announces the commemoration of National American Indian Heritage Month in November with this year's theme from the Society of American Indian Heritage Month (SAIGE): "Honoring Our Nation: Building Strength through Understanding."

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Military Spouse Employment Partnership

VA Joins DOD Program Seeking to Increase Military Spouse Employment

In October 2018, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) announced it was advancing employment opportunities for military spouses by joining the Department of Defense (DOD) Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP). One year later, VA announces the induction of the entire Department into MSEP.

MSEP is a career program connecting military spouses with more than 390 affiliated employers who have committed to recruit, hire, promote and retain military spouses in portable careers. MSEP is part of the DOD's broader Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) program, which seeks to reduce the 23 percent unemployment rate experienced by military spouses and 25 percent wage gap experienced by military wives. SECO provides education and career guidance to military spouses worldwide and offers free, comprehensive resources and tools related to career exploration; education; training and licensing; employment readiness; and career connections. SECO also offers free career-coaching services six days a week.

VA's Office of Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security, and Preparedness (HRA/OSP) is working directly with MSEP, the Office of Personnel Management, VA administration Human Resources (HR) executives, and staff office HR liaisons to ensure that VA's HR community is well-positioned to leverage this Partnership in Fiscal Year 2020 and actively engage tens of thousands of military spouses across the Nation regarding employment with VA.

Visit <https://www.va.gov/careers-employment/family-resources> for resources for military and Veteran family members. For information on the MSEP and active job postings for military spouses, visit <https://msejobs.militaryonesource.mil>. For information on SECO, visit <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil/portal>. For information on state occupational license recognition options for military spouses, visit <https://www.veterans.gov/milspouses>. *Some of this article taken from: <https://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=5132>.*

Alaska Territorial Guard

Under Threat of Invasion 75 Years Ago, Alaska Natives Joined the Army to Defend Homeland

When the Japanese raided and occupied parts of Alaska during World War II, the Army called on Alaska Natives to defend the northern territory. Given no pay, more than 6,300 Alaskans from 12 to 80 years old signed on to be sentries for the newly created Alaska Territorial Guard (ATG). Once enlisted, the Alaska Natives trained on Army tactics so they could defend the territory from an attack, if needed.

In August 2000, a bill was signed into law by President Bush ordering the Secretary of Defense to issue Honorable Discharges to all Americans who served in the ATG. The ATG Task Force was assembled and has been searching for ATG members in order to provide them with honorable service records, including an honorable discharge. The task force is committed to finding and assisting these Veterans, their families, dependents and survivors in receiving all the benefits and rewards entitled to them.

If you or a family member served in the Alaska Territorial Guard, please apply for ATG status by visiting <http://veterans.alaska.gov/ATG>. *Some of this article taken from: <https://www.defense.gov/Newsroom/News/Article/Article/1374255/alaska-natives-defended-their-territory-75-years-ago>.*

VA Exceeds or Meets All Disability Employment Goals

ODI Proudly Announces Historic Department-Wide Accomplishment

As of September 30, 2019, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) met/exceeded all six U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) goals for increasing the employment of persons with disabilities (PWD) and targeted disabilities (PWTD). PWD permanent workforce new hires were 12.09 percent (surpassing the 12 percent goal) and PWTD permanent workforce new hires were 3.08 percent (surpassing the two percent goal). Looking at VA's entire permanent workforce, PWD represented 16.59 percent in Grade Clusters below GS/GM-11 equivalent, exceeding the 12 percent goal; and PWTD represented 3.16 percent, exceeding the 2 percent goal. In Grade Clusters at or above GS/GM-11, step 1 equivalent, PWD represented 12 percent (the goal); and PWTD represented 2.16 percent, exceeding the 2 percent goal. In fiscal year 2018, VA did not achieve these EEOC goals for both higher-grade clusters. For more information on VA's National Disability Employment Program, visit the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) website at <https://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/iwd.aspx>. Congratulations, VA!

Veterans Day

November 11, 2019



Honoring All Who Served



va.gov

Commemorate

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Native Americans served in the post-9/11 period in a higher percentage than Veterans of other ethnicities, 18.6 percent vs. 14 percent, respectively (<https://americanindian.si.edu/nnavm/heroes>). VA managers and supervisors are encouraged to support events and activities that recognize American Indians and Alaskan Natives (AI/ANs) and their many contributions to American society.

VA recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SAIGE to further a long-standing partnership that will bring more awareness and support to the activities of each organization and further AI/AN cultural appreciation in VA.

Formed in 2002, SAIGE is the first National non-profit organization representing AI/AN Federal, Tribal, State, and local government employees. SAIGE provides a forum on the issues, challenges, and opportunities of AI/ANs in the government workforce (including Tribal governments) and works to foster a professional network among AI/AN government employees.

SAIGE is proud to host an outstanding week-long annual National Training Program focused on professional development, leadership and topics that are integral to the highly complex relationship known as the Federal Indian Trust Responsibility. As part of this program, SAIGE offers special training sessions for Veterans and youth, and in Federal Indian Law. Additionally, cultural events are presented by local native people. For more information, visit <https://saige.org>.

The following list of organizations, events, and activities can assist in furthering AI/AN cultural awareness and understanding:

- Construction has begun on the National Native American Veterans Memorial on the National Mall. Visit <https://americanindian.si.edu/nnavm>.
- The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) has locations in New York, NY and Washington, DC. Visit <https://americanindian.si.edu>.
- NMAI also hosts an online exhibit. Visit <https://americanindian.si.edu/americans>.
- The Library of Congress hosts a Native American Heritage Month collection of AI/AN video and audio recordings. Visit <https://nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov/audio-and-video>.
- Finally, the VA Office of Tribal Government Relations works to enhance VA's relationships with Native American Veterans and their communities. Visit <https://www.va.gov/TRIBALGOVERNMENT/index.asp>.

For more ideas to commemorate Native American Indian Heritage Month in November, contact your local VA facility Equal Employment Opportunity manager or your local AI/AN communities. For more information, contact [Ms. Sehar Minhas](#), VA's National AI/AN Employment Program Manager, ODI, or visit VA's National AI/AN Employment Program Web page at <https://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/aian.aspx>.

VA and FEW MOU

Department and Women's Organization Reaffirm Shared Vision

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently met with Federally Employed Women (FEW) to update their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This update reflects changes in VA programs to recommit, strengthen, and reaffirm our shared vision regarding the advancement of women in their respective workplaces. Visit <https://www.few.org> for resources FEW offers to help you build your career. For more information, visit <https://www.diversity.va.gov/programs/women.aspx> or contact [Sehar Minhas](#), VA's Federal Women's Program Manager, ODI.



Office of Human Resources & Administration/Operations, Security, and Preparedness
Office of Diversity and Inclusion | Office of Resolution Management
Alternative Dispute Resolution | Resolution Support Center | Harassment Prevention Program
Office of Accountability and Whistleblower Protection | VHA Diversity & Inclusion Community of Practice
VA on Facebook | VA on YouTube | VA Jobs | VA Pulse Reasonable Accommodation Community of Practice

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs | Office of Diversity & Inclusion
810 Vermont Avenue, NW (06) | Washington, DC 20420 | 202-461-4131 | 202-501-2145 (Fax)